

1890 Institution Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants (CBG) Program

2015 Request for Applications (RFA)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: March 26, 2015

ELIGIBILITY: See Part III, A of RFA



United States
Department of
Agriculture

National Institute
of Food and
Agriculture

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

1890 INSTITUTION TEACHING, RESEARCH AND EXTENSION CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS (CBG) PROGRAM

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under **10.216**.

DATES: Applications must be received by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 26, 2015**. Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding (see Part IV, C. of this RFA). Comments regarding this request for applications (RFA) are requested within 6 months from the issuance of this notice. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks your comments about this RFA. We will consider the comments when we develop the next RFA for the program, if applicable, and we'll use them to meet the requirements of section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). Submit written stakeholder comments by the deadline set forth in the DATES portion of this Notice to: Policy@nifa.usda.gov. (This e-mail address is intended only for receiving comments regarding this RFA and not requesting information or forms.) In your comments, please state that you are responding to the 1890 Institution Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NIFA requests applications for the 1890 Institution Teaching, Research and Extension Capacity Building Grants (CBG) Program for fiscal year (FY) 2015. The intent of this program is to:

- Build and strengthen institutional capacity through stimulating the development of high quality Teaching, Research and Extension programs at the 1890 Land-Grant Universities;
- Produce Baccalaureate and higher level degree graduates capable of strengthening the Nation's food, agricultural, natural resources and human science professionals and scientists;
- Develop strong research that addresses current challenges in today's agriculture; and
- Deliver needed help to communities, small farms and other clients.

Providing this support requires the CBG program to strengthen research, teaching and extension capacity needed to advance fundamental sciences, as well as translational research and development in support of agriculture; and to coordinate opportunities to build on these discoveries at the 1890 land-grant universities.

Pursuant to the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015 (H.R. 83), the amount available for support of this program in FY **2015** is approximately is approximately **\$18 million**.

This notice identifies the objectives for CBG projects, the eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and the application forms and associated instructions needed to apply for a CBG grant.

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PART I—FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

Authority for this program is contained in section 1417 (b)(4) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA), as amended [7 U.S.C. 3152 (b)(4)] and pursuant to annual appropriations made available specifically for the 1890 Capacity Building Program. Section 7107 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) (Pub. L. 110-246) amended the authority for the 1890 Capacity Building Program to allow for extension capacity building, as well as teaching and research. In accordance with the statutory authority, subject to the availability of funds, the Secretary of Agriculture may make competitive grants, for a period not to exceed five (5) years, to design and implement food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences programs to build Teaching, Research and Extension capacity at colleges and universities having significant minority enrollments.

The CBG Program supports the [**USDA Research, Education and Economics \(REE\) Action Plan 2014 Strategic Goal #6: Education and Science Literacy**](#) to recruit, cultivate, and develop the next generation of scientists and leaders, and to produce a highly-skilled workforce for food, agriculture, natural resources, forestry, and environmental systems. CBG also supports **NIFA Strategic Goal #1: Catalyze exemplary and relevant research, education and extension programs; and sub-goal #1.7.** -- to ensure the development of human capital, communities, and a diverse workforce through research, education, extension and engagement programs in food and agricultural sciences to support a sustainable agriculture system.

For purposes of this program, the term “food, agricultural sciences, natural resources and human sciences” means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in the food and fiber, agricultural, renewable natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences, in the broadest sense of these terms, including but not limited to, activities relating to the production, processing, marketing, distribution, conservation, utilization, consumption, research, and development of food and agriculturally related products and services, and inclusive of programs in agriculture, natural resources, aquaculture, forestry, veterinary medicine, family and consumer sciences, rural human ecology, rural economic, community, or business development, and closely allied disciplines.

B. Purpose and Priorities

The Department of Agriculture depends upon sound programs in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences through partnership with the Nation’s colleges and universities to produce well trained professionals for careers in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences and conducted research and extension activities that address the challenges in food and agriculture in the US.

The purpose of the 1890 Capacity Building Program is to support research, teaching, and extension by awarding grants that address key problems of national, regional, and multi-institutional importance in sustaining all components of agriculture, including farm efficiency and profitability, ranching, renewable energy, forestry (both urban and agroforestry), aquaculture,

rural communities and entrepreneurship, human nutrition, food safety, family and consumer sciences, biotechnology, and conventional breeding. Providing this support requires the CBG program to build and strengthen research, teaching and extension capacity needed to advance fundamental sciences as well as translational research and development in support of agriculture; and coordinate opportunities to build on these discoveries at the 1890 land-grant universities. The CBG Program is intended to stimulate development of high quality teaching, research and extension programs at these institutions to assist USDA in its mission of providing a professional work force in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences. This CBG Program is competitive in nature and provides support to the 1890 land-grant institutions (1890s) for Teaching, Research and Extension projects in targeted high-priority areas. Cooperation with a USDA agency in developing a proposal and carrying out a project is not required, but may be useful for strengthening departmental partnerships and linkages with these important land-grant institutions.

This program is designed specifically to build the institutional Teaching, Research and Extension capacities of the eligible institutions through cooperative programs with Federal and non-Federal entities. The program is designed to achieve three (3) major goals:

1. To advance the cultural diversity of the food, agricultural, human science and natural resources scientific and professional work force by attracting and educating more students from underrepresented groups;
2. To strengthen linkages among the 1890 institutions, other colleges and universities, USDA, other federal agencies, and private industry; and
3. To enhance and strengthen the quality of Teaching, Research and Extension programs at the 1890 institutions to more readily establish them as full partners in the U.S. food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences higher education system.

NOTE: See Part VIII, E. for definitions of ‘capacity building’ and ‘food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences.’

eXtension

CBG encourages projects that develop content and programs suitable for delivery through the Cooperative Extension System’s eXtension Initiative. You may use funds to contribute to existing Communities of Practice (CoP)/Learning Networks (LN) or to form a new Learning Network(s). Projects must align with the eXtension vision, mission, and values. If an CoP is applicable, you must have a letter of acknowledgement from eXtension; you may also need a letter of support from one or more of the Communities of Practice. For detailed guidance on how to partner with eXtension, go to <http://create.extension.org/node/2057>.

Global engagement

NIFA’s programs are intended to promote advances in U.S. food, agriculture, natural resources and human sciences. Agriculture, for instance, is increasingly worldwide in scope and reach. If appropriate, applicants to CBG may include international partnerships or engagement in

proposals. In doing so, applicants are to keep in mind that any international activity included in a proposal (e.g., partnerships, exchanges, training, travel) must first and foremost support CBG program goals. Applicants must clearly describe and demonstrate how international activities proposed in the application will contribute to and support the objectives and desired outcomes within the United States while also benefiting the international partner.

NIFA is soliciting applications for the **CBG** under the following areas:

- (1) Teaching;**
- (2) Research; or**
- (3) Extension.**

NOTE: Integrated applications must select one of the above areas which most closely represents the major component of the project.

Applications must address the following four (4) items:

1. Focus on at least one (1) of the **Project Type** (described in Part II, C.1.): Teaching, Research, or Extension;
2. Address at least one (1) of the **Need Areas** (described in Part II, C, 2.);
3. Address at least one (1) of the **CBG Program Priority Areas** (described in Part II, C, 4.); and
4. Address at least one (1) of the **NIFA Challenge Areas** (described in Part II, C, 6.);

PART II—AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

According to the FY 2015 Appropriations Bill, H.R. 83, the amount to support this program in FY **2015** is approximately **\$18 million**. The funds will be awarded through a grant.

There is no commitment by USDA to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards.

Funding and Award Restrictions

- a) A single application must be either: a Teaching Project, a Research Project, an Extension Project, or an Integrated Project;
- b) Eligible institutions may submit up to 12 applications per institution in FY 2015 (Professional Development applications will not count against this maximum);
- c) Eligible institutions may submit up to three (3) Professional Development applications per institution in FY 2015. Each application will support one (1) faculty member from the applicant university. No more than \$700,000 will be awarded in support of Professional Development grants. Individuals are not eligible to receive more than one Professional Development award within a five (5) year period.
- d) Eligible institutions may receive teaching, research, extension and/or integrated awards up to a maximum of 10 percent (10%) of the available 1890 CBG funds. (Professional Development applications will not count against this maximum). The 10 percent maximum may be exceeded if sufficient meritorious applications are not received from other eligible institutions.
- e) Project periods will be up to 36 months in duration. Including potential no-cost extension(s), the project period must not exceed the statutory maximum of 60 months. (See Award Terms and Conditions for further details.)
- f) Please be advised that funds will be distributed equally between research, teaching and extension projects. Awards will be made based on quality of applications. In the absence of sufficient meritorious applications in a particular area, the remaining funds will be redistributed to the other areas based on the quality of the applications.

Awards issued as a result of this RFA will have designated the Automated Standard Applications for Payment System (ASAP), operated by the Department of Treasury's Financial Management Service, as the payment system for funds. For more information see http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/method_of_payment.html.

B. Types of Applications

In FY 2015, you may submit applications to the CBG Program as one of the following types of requests:

(1) **New application.** This is a project application that has not been previously submitted to the CBG Program. We will review all new applications competitively using the selection process and evaluation criteria described in Part V—Application Review Requirements.

(2) **Renewal application.** This is a project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award. Applications for renewed funding must contain the same information as required for new applications; they also must contain a Progress Report (see Project Narrative, Part IV). Renewal applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in the area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

(3) **Resubmitted application.** This is an application that had previously been submitted to the CBG Program but not funded. Project Directors (PDs) must respond to the previous review panel summary (see Response to Previous Review, Part IV). Resubmitted applications must be received by the relevant due dates, will be evaluated in competition with other pending applications in appropriate area to which they are assigned, and will be reviewed according to the same evaluation criteria as new applications.

C. Project Types

NIFA has limited the amount of funding for which an applicant may apply. The limitations are as follows:

Maximum Fund Allocation (Projects may be up to 36 months in duration)				
		Grant Type		
Project Type		Single Institution	Joint Institution	Professional Development
	Teaching	\$150,000	\$300,000	\$100,000
	Research	\$300,000	\$500,000	
	Extension	\$250,000	\$350,000	
	Integrated	\$600,000		

Applications must select one of the project types (i.e., Teaching, Research or Extension).

1) Project Type Descriptions

Teaching applications must focus on one (1) or more of the following:

a) Degree Levels:

To improve teaching and research training projects in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences (Part VIII, E. Definitions) at the:

- i) Baccalaureate degree-level, or
- ii) Graduate degree-level

b) Faculty Preparation in Food, Agricultural, Natural Resources and Human Sciences:

To advance faculty development in the areas of teaching competency and leadership, subject matter expertise, or student recruitment and advising skills, in order to provide students the experience or knowledge that will encourage them to pursue advanced postsecondary degrees in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences, or prepare them for the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences workforce.

c) Outreach Programs:

To expose K-14 students and teachers to agricultural topics and generate interest in agricultural careers. Programs that may be considered include agriculture-based high schools, urban-agricultural education programs, summer high-school or youth programs in agriculture, articulation agreements with community colleges and partnerships with youth-focused programs, such as 4-H.

Research applications must focus upon one (1) or more of the following:

a) Fundamental Research:

To provide basic knowledge that enables and promotes advances in applied research and from which major conceptual breakthroughs are expected to occur;

b) Applied Research:

To expand the findings of fundamental research in order to uncover practical ways in which new knowledge can be advanced to benefit individuals and society; and/or

c) Multidisciplinary Research:

To provide close collaboration between two (2) or more disciplines. These collaborations, where appropriate, may integrate the biological, physical, chemical, and/or social sciences.

Extension applications must focus on one (1) or more of the following:

a) **4-H Youth Development:**

To cultivate important life skills in youth that build character and assist them in making appropriate life and career choices, address at-risk youth challenges such as school retention and academic achievement, engage youth in STEM education and social skills through hands-on projects and activities;

b) **Agriculture:**

To assist individuals learning new ways to produce income through alternative enterprises, improved marketing strategies, and management skills and help farmers, ranchers, and foresters improve productivity through resource management, controlling crop pests, soil testing, livestock production practices, and marketing. Also to promote aquaculture, small ruminant production, small fruits and vegetable production, and many other niche crops that are important to small-scale producers;

c) **Leadership Development:**

To train extension professionals and volunteers to deliver programs in agriculture, gardening, health and safety, family and consumer issues, and 4-H youth development and serve in leadership roles in the community;

d) **Natural Resources:**

To inform landowners and homeowners how to use natural resources wisely and protect the environment with educational programs in water quality, timber management, composting, lawn waste management, and recycling;

e) **Family and Consumer Sciences:**

To assist families become resilient and healthy by teaching nutrition, food preparation skills, positive child care, parenting, family communication, financial management, and health care strategies; and/or

f) **Community and Economic Development:**

To support local governments, community and non-profit organizations to investigate and create viable options for economic and community development, such as improved job creation and retention, small medium-sized and family-owned business development, effective and coordinated emergency response, solid waste disposal, tourism development, workforce education, and land use planning.

Integrated applications intended to strengthen food and agriculture sciences at the 1890 institutions through integration of research, teaching, and/or extension. One (1) of the founding pillars of NIFA is to bring together research, teaching, and/or extension in a

coordinated manner to address high-priority national, multistate, or regional agricultural issues. The 1890 CBG Legislative Authority authorized three (3) project types: research, teaching and extension. The Integrated application option was added to the 1890 CBG program because the integration of teaching, research and extension is essential for building capacity at the 1890 universities. These applications must include at least two (2) of the three (3) project types. An integrated project must **name one (1) of the project types (teaching, research or extension) as the Primary Project Type**. The primary project type is defined as the area which will receive most of the funding (up to two thirds of the total funding). **There is no program code for the integrated application.** **Therefore, it is imperative that the applicants clearly identify the primary project type in their abstract/summary and select the appropriate program code for this area** (see section 3. of this part).

NIFA places high value on integration in program design and implementation in order to address the many and complex problems facing U.S. agriculture. Research, teaching, and extension integration may be done at the project level or more generally at the program level. A project is optimally integrated if the components complement each other and are truly necessary for ultimate success. Research is expected to address knowledge gaps that are critical to the development of practices and programs to address a problem. Extension activities will lead to measurable, documented changes in learning, actions, or conditions in an identified audience or stakeholder group. Teaching initiatives will strengthen institutional capacities and result in curricula and related products that provide sustained impact.

The following criteria are applicable to integrated applications:

- a) The proposed research component of an integrated project application should address knowledge gaps that are critical to the development of practices and programs to address the stated problem;
- b) The proposed extension component of an integrated project application should lead to measurable, documented changes in learning, actions, or conditions in an identified audience or stakeholder group. Extension related activities designed to build institutional capacity are also allowable. The extension component should incorporate a wide range of research results, not just those of the current project application. Please note that research-related activities such as publication of papers, or speaking at scientific meetings are not considered extension for the purposes of this program;
- c) The proposed education (teaching and teaching-related) component of an integrated project application should strengthen institutional capacities and result in curricula and related products that will be sustained beyond the life of the project. The following activities are appropriate for the education component of an integrated project application: curriculum development; instructional materials development; education delivery systems; student experiential learning (internships, externships, clinics); student recruitment and retention efforts; career planning materials and counseling; pedagogy; student learning styles and student-centered instruction; faculty

- development programs; student study abroad and international research opportunities relevant to overall program goals for U.S. agriculture; and faculty and student exchanges;
- d) Integrated project applications should aim to resolve today's problems through the application of science-based knowledge;
 - e) Integrated project applications should address needs identified by stakeholders. Stakeholder involvement in project application development, implementation, and evaluation is strongly encouraged, where appropriate;
 - f) Integrated project applications should clearly identify anticipated outcomes and must have a plan for evaluating and documenting the success of the project. The applicant is strongly advised to consult with an evaluation specialist to develop appropriate measures of success;
 - g) Applications proposing integrated projects must include the elements of a logic model detailing the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. This information may be provided as a narrative or formatted into a logic model chart. More information and resources related to the logic model planning process are provided at http://www.NIFA.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated_logic_model.html;
 - h) Integrated applications should contain objectives for each function included in the project. Please note that extension and teaching activities are expected to differ and should be described in separate project objectives;
 - i) Integrated project applications must budget sufficient resources to carry out the set of extension, research, and/or teaching activities that will lead to the desired outcomes. **No more than two-thirds (2/3) of a project's budget may be focused on a single component.** For example, no more than two-thirds of the project's budget may be allocated to research, or teaching, or extension;
 - j) Integrated applications must include individuals on the project team with significant expertise in each component of the project (research, teaching, and/or extension); and
 - k) Integrated applications may be submitted by a single eligible institution where the expertise for all areas (research, teaching, and/or extension) are within the PD's institution or multi-institutions where the expertise for one or two of the areas are from another institution(s).

See <http://www.NIFA.usda.gov/funding/integrated/integrated.html> for general information on NIFA integrated programs, including tips for writing integrated project proposals and an example of an integrated proposal.

2) Need Area Descriptions

Teaching Need Areas

Background

Teaching applications must address one (1) or more of the following Need Areas identified below. The applications may include activities to institute academic coursework that may be offered for-credit. Applicants are encouraged to design innovative projects that have broad-based applicability beyond a single course or an individual instructor and include a library enhancement or digital component. These projects must be related to subject matter within the broadly defined food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences (Part VIII, E. - Definitions).

STEM

CBG applications may support the goals and objectives of the Federal Coordination in STEM Education Task Force as defined in the *Coordinating Federal Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Investments: Progress Report*.

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/nstc_federal_stem_education_coordination_report.pdf

The STEM Workforce goals are to provide the STEM education and training opportunities needed to prepare a diverse, well-qualified workforce that is able to address the mission needs of the Federal agencies and lead in innovation across the broad spectrum of industries and occupations related to the missions of Federal agencies. The STEM Literacy and Proficiency goals are to increase access to and improve the quality of PreK-12, postsecondary, and informal STEM education. For additional information on the Federal STEM education investments, visit:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/nstc/committees/costem>

Leadership Skills Development

The development of leadership skills, knowledge and qualities are necessary for preparing students for agricultural related careers in private sector, government and academia. **CBG teaching applications must demonstrably incorporate a leadership development component** to ensure that students are equipped with both technical and leadership abilities upon graduation. Specific activities may include:

- Developing practical applications to increase understanding of leadership roles, including critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills, ethics and professionalism, and working in teams.
- Connecting the academic classroom experience with daily leadership roles and organizational activities,

- Providing opportunities for mentoring and shadowing, and
- Organizing leadership academies, workshops, trainings, etc.

Teaching applications must demonstrate how the chosen Program Priority Area is addressed when selecting one of the following Teaching Need Areas.

a) Curricula Design and Materials Development

This Need Area promotes developing new (or adapting existing) curricula and related materials to meet changes anticipated within the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences system. Projects should be integrated and multidisciplinary, and possess learner-centered instruction which will demonstrate an improvement in teaching and student learning against core course objectives. Applicants are expected to demonstrate how the project will reach large audiences efficiently and effectively, provide hands-on learning experiences, extend learning beyond the classroom, reinforce recent research on how to motivate students to learn, retain, apply, and transfer knowledge, skills, and competencies, and integrate and synthesize knowledge.

b) Faculty Preparation and Enhancement for Education

This Need Area prepares academic faculty for sustainable change to address emerging student clientele (demographic composition, learning styles, digital applicability), improving Teaching competency (subject matter expertise and pedagogy), or developing student recruitment and advising skills (career opportunities in emerging agricultural sciences fields). Training of targeted faculty recipient(s) shall be intentional and relevant to the identified educational needs of the students, who will be the beneficiaries of such faculty development.

Examples of projects addressing this Area include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a self-sustaining model for faculty professional development that better prepares faculty for teaching careers, or provides retraining for experienced faculty;
- Promoting teaching and advising strategies to increase faculty understanding of how to recruit and retain populations and cultures traditionally underrepresented in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences workforce; and/or
- Coordinating and/or participating in conferences, training, and other learning experience designed to enhance the credentials and ability of faculty to advance the instructional goals of the Institution.

c) Instructional Delivery Systems

This Need Area encourages the development and use of alternative methods of delivering instruction to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and cost efficiency of Teaching programs. Examples of alternative methods of delivering instruction include, but are not limited to: using state-of-the-art digital technology; faculty sharing, cross enrollments, joint degrees, teleconferencing; networking via satellite communications; e-learning and online instruction or utilizing mobile classrooms and laboratories and individualized learning centers. Multi-institutional, regional or national collaborations are encouraged. Emphasis should be on improving the art of Teaching by faculty.

d) Scientific Instrumentation for Teaching

This Need Area provides students with the necessary experience with suitable, up-to-date equipment to involve them in work central to understanding advances in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences and to prepare them for work or further graduate/professional training.

This program initiative will support the acquisition of instructional laboratory and classroom equipment to assure the achievement and maintenance of outstanding food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences higher education programs. An application may request support for:

- Replacing non-functional or obsolete equipment;
- Acquiring new, state-of-the-art instructional equipment;
- Upgrading existing equipment; and/or
- Establishing equipment-sharing capabilities via consortia or centers that develop innovative opportunities such as mobile laboratories or satellite access to industry or government laboratories.

e) Student Experiential Learning

This Need Area encourages the development of new student learning opportunities where students are placed in team-oriented, problem-solving, decision-making situations in the context of real-world experiences. Experiential learning in laboratory research or other internships with business and industry, community organizations, federal agencies and other domains that provide knowledge and skills for graduate study should be given priority.

Projects addressing this Area must:

- Demonstrate how the experience will produce qualified and well trained graduates;

- Contain an evaluation process involving both the faculty or mentor to assure that students meet project objectives; and/or
- Document that the field of science under consideration is experiencing a shortage of scientific and professional personnel, and how the project plans to address this deficiency.

Individual students may be supported under this experiential learning opportunity for up to three (3) years (including summers, semesters, or semester breaks). Requested grant funds may be used as stipends for students while they are working in research/field settings. Students should be required to prepare written and oral summaries of the experiential learning gained through this opportunity. To attract high-caliber students, stipends should be competitive with alternative employment options. A modest amount of funds may be requested for materials/supplies to facilitate students' broad exposure to research/field techniques and methodologies. Grant recipients are encouraged to take advantage of any related paid internship opportunities provided by state, county, federal, business and industry sources.

The CBG Program also support the goals and objectives of the “100,000 Strong” study abroad initiatives (<http://100kstrong.org>; <http://www.100kstrongamericas.org>), and grant applicants are encouraged to consider the same in their applications. The importance of providing opportunities for U.S. students and scholars to study abroad has long been recognized and supported by the United States government. In November 2009, President Barak Obama announced the “100,000 Strong” initiative, which is a national effort designed to increase the number and diversify the composition of American students studying in China. In March 2011, President Obama launched “100,000 Strong in the Americas”, which is an initiative to increase the number of US students studying in Latin America and the Caribbean by 100,000 by the year 2020.

f) Student Recruitment and Retention

This Need Area is to enhance student recruitment and retention programs in order to strengthen the Nation's scientific and professional workforce.

Examples of projects that address this Area include, but are not limited to:

- Special outreach programs for enhancing the academic pipeline for elementary and secondary students;
- Outreach to parents, counselors, and the general public to broaden awareness of the extensive nature and diversity of career opportunities for graduates in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences;

- Development of curriculum and learning modules for state Ag in the Classroom teachers that establish more effective linkages with high school science classes and promote general agricultural literacy;
- Special retention programs to assure student progression through and completion of an educational program;
- Use of regional or national media to promote food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences higher education; and/or
- Provision of financial assistance to enable and encourage students to pursue and complete an undergraduate or graduate degree in an area of the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences.

Recruitment and retention efforts should be summarized quantitatively (i.e., numbers of students recruited against those contacted) and qualitatively (i.e., lessons learned that improve future recruitment strategies).

Research Need Areas

Background

Research applications must address one (1) or both of the following Need Areas where there is a present or anticipated need for increased science-based knowledge to address emerging state, regional, national and global issues. Applicants are encouraged to include a library enhancement component related to the Area in their applications. In addition, these projects must be related to subject matter within the broadly defined food, agricultural and human sciences (see Part VIII, E. - Definitions).

Applicants are also encouraged to participate in Multistate Research Activities (http://www.nifa.usda.gov/qlinks/research_multistate.html) related to their area of expertise.

In support of the proposal and to improve the submitted project, applicants are strongly encouraged to reference recommendations from the National Academy of Science 2010 report entitled, *New Biology for the 21st Century: Ensuring the United States Leads the Coming Revolution,*” (http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=12764&page=1). The report contains a set of recommendations that recognize that the most effective leveraging of investments would come from a coordinated, interagency effort to encourage the emergence of a New Biology that would enunciate and address broad and challenging societal problems.

Research applications must demonstrate how the chosen Program Priority Area is addressed when selecting one of the following Research Need Areas.

- Studies and Experimentation in Food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences**

The purpose of this Need Area is to advance the body of knowledge in those basic and applied natural and social sciences that comprise the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences. Projects addressing this Area are encouraged to focus on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research activities addressing critical issues rather than single discipline-specific research studies.

Examples of studies and experiments that address this Area include, but are not limited to:

- Conceiving, designing, and evaluating new bio-processing techniques for eliminating undesirable constituents from or adding desirable ones to food products;
- Developing bio-energy/fuel alternatives, conducting plant or animal breeding programs to develop higher yielding and improved quality products and improved diseases resistance;
- Proposing and evaluating methods to enhance utilization of the capabilities and resources of food and agricultural institutions to promote rural development (e.g., exploitation of new technologies by small rural businesses);
- Analyzing social, economic, and physiological aspects of nutrition and health, food choices, and life-style choices, and community strategies for meeting the changing needs of different population groups; and/or
- Advancing the body of knowledge in highly important scientific, food and agriculture program areas such as human nutrition, food safety, sustainable agriculture, global climate change, biotechnology and genomics, newly developed research areas, such as proteomics, metabolimics and nanotechnology.

b) Centralized Research Support Systems

The purpose of this Need Area is to establish centralized research support systems that: (1) meet national needs or serve regions or 1890 institution clientele that cannot otherwise afford, or do not have access to such support; or (2) provide research support more economically, thereby freeing up resources for other research uses. Applicants must demonstrate how their chosen Program Priority Area is addressed when selecting this Area.

Examples of projects that address this Area include, but are not limited to:

- Storage, maintenance, characterization, evaluation and enhancement of germplasm for use by animal and plant breeders, including those using the techniques of biotechnology;

- Establishment of computerized data banks of important scientific information (e.g., human nutrition, epidemiological, demographic, weather, economic, crop yields); or
- Establishment of expert service centers for sophisticated and highly specialized methodologies (e.g., evaluation of organoleptic and nutritional quality of foods, toxicology, taxonomic identifications and consumer preferences demographics).

Extension Need Area

Background

Extension applications must address one (1) or more of the following Extension Need Areas where there is a present or anticipated need for increased science-based knowledge to address emerging state, regional, national and global issues. Applicants are encouraged to include a library enhancement or digital component related to the Area in their applications. In addition, these projects must be related to subject matter within the broadly defined food, agricultural and human sciences (see Part VIII, E. - Definitions).

Extension applications must demonstrate how the chosen Program Priority Area is addressed when selecting one of the following Extension Need Areas.

a) Extension Program Development Support Systems

The purpose of this area is to increase the quality of extension education programs to clientele through training of Extension specialists, educators, para-professionals, technicians and volunteers. The training may focus on professional development, leadership development, application of the extension program development model, development of train the trainer models, volunteer development, volunteer delivery systems, etc. This area will also include program accountability support systems which will translate into the delivery of more effective programs by enhancing the expertise and instruments available to effectively report impacts and evaluate extension programs.

b) Extension Technology Upgrades

The purpose of this area is to provide funds to upgrade traditional equipment and instruments, establishing mobile delivery systems (laboratories and food safety kitchens, etc.) and offer emerging delivery technologies (e.g., IT applications such as distance education, web conferencing, podcasting, and Facebook interfaces).

c) Extension Delivery/Methodology

The purpose of this need area is to develop effective methodologies, strategies, or delivery systems to enhance services to the underserved, including developing new or modifying existing curriculums; establishing program centers, experiential learning

programs, or after-school programs; and utilizing research results for effective community-based programs.

d) Other Extension Initiatives

The purpose of this need area is to support projects that may not fit the need areas above, but are creative initiatives designed to provide needed enhancement of the institutions Extension capacity.

3) Program Code

Based on the Legislative Authority, each application must be self-designated as teaching, research or extension in the Project Summary [see Part IV, B. 3.a.]. Please select one (1) of the following Program Codes which most closely represents your application:

Research Program Code = “EQ”; or

Teaching Program Code = “EP”; or

Extension Program Code = “EWE.”

Only one code must be used when applicants are completing the NIFA Supplemental Information form (See Part IV, B.8). The applicant must select the correct code that responds to type of application (research, teaching, or extension). Selecting the incorrect code will result in the application being directed to the wrong review panel.

Applications that are not so designated with the codes below will be assigned to a category by NIFA.

4) CBG Program Priority Areas

The Department of Agriculture and stakeholders have identified a number of high priority areas. These high priority areas are for Teaching, Research or Extension applications. The application should have the potential to encourage regional or national program delivery in one (1) of the following priority areas:

- a) Human health, obesity as it relates to nutrition, and human sciences;
- b) Bio-energy/biofuel and natural resources;
- c) Food safety;
- d) Water quality;
- e) Global food security and agricultural bio-security;
- f) Rural communities for 21st century (expanded opportunities for small businesses and small farms);
- g) Sustainable agriculture;
- h) Youth development;
- i) Family and consumer sciences; and/or
- j) Global climate change including environmental sciences.

Other Areas in General Food & Agricultural Science

This priority area is for innovative applications in Teaching, Research or Extension **in areas** that address local, regional, or national issues **in food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences not included in priority areas listed above**. Projects in this area may not fit any of the USDA or NIFA Strategic Goals but address an emerging local, regional or national issue.

5) Discipline Codes for 1890 Capacity Building Grants Program

Eligible institutions may, within the Teaching, Research, or Extension Project Need Areas identified for support, propose projects in any discipline(s) or subject matter area(s) of the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences noted below:

For Teaching Proposals (1)		For Research Proposals (2)		For Extension Proposals (3)	
Code	Discipline	Code	Discipline	Code	Discipline
M1	Agribusiness Management & Marketing	L2	Agribusiness Management & Marketing	A3	4-H Youth Development
E1	Agricultural Engineering	E2	Agricultural Engineering	B3	Agriculture
A1	Animal Sciences	Q2	Agricultural Social Sciences	C3	Leadership Development
Q1	Aquaculture	A2	Animal Sciences	D3	Natural Resources
T1	Entomology	P2	Aquaculture	E3	Family and Consumer Sciences
C1	Environmental Science & Natural Resource Conservation	C2	Conservation and Renewable Natural Resources	F3	Community and Economic Development
F1	Food Science/Technology	S2	Entomology	I3	International Extension
G1	General Agricultural Science	J2	Environmental Sciences/Management		
H1	Human Sciences	F2	Food Science/Technology		
N1	Human Nutrition	M2	Human Nutrition		
I1	International Education	I2	International Education/Research		
P1	Plant Sciences	N2	Plant Sciences		
B1	Related Biological Sciences	B2	Related Biological Sciences		
R1	Rural Development / Social Science	O2	Soil Sciences		
V1	Veterinary Science	H2	Human Sciences		

Applicants are to identify a primary discipline code and may identify one (1) additional discipline code that categorize the project application. At review, each application is evaluated by three (3) reviewers and one (1) Ad hoc reviewer. The discipline codes selected by the applicants are used to match reviewers' education and expertise to the applications.

Since the discipline codes are specific to CBG, the Grants.gov application forms do not include any of the above-referenced discipline codes. Hence, it is imperative that you provide the appropriate codes. In the keywords portion of the application package, applicants should include words that clearly designate which of the Challenge areas, CBG Priority Areas, Need Areas, and Discipline(s) are addressed in the application.

6) USDA Priorities and NIFA Challenge Areas

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) was created by the FY 2008 Farm Bill, which identified the following priorities for the United States agriculture:

1. Plant health and production and plant products;
2. Animal health and production and animal products;
3. Food safety, nutrition, and health;
4. Renewable energy, natural resources, and environment;
5. Agriculture systems and technology; and
6. Agriculture economics and rural communities.

Based upon the above-referenced priority areas, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture identified the following challenge areas as a focus; therefore, all applications must address at least one (1) of the following **NIFA Challenge Areas**:

- a. Childhood Obesity Prevention;
- b. Climate Variability and Change;
- c. Food Safety;
- d. Food Security;
- e. Sustainable Bioenergy; and/or
- f. Water.

D. Grant Types

Applicants may submit:

1. Single Institution Applications (see Part VIII, E. - Definitions):

Teaching, Research or Extension applications that **support single institution approaches** to local or regional problems or opportunities in one (1) of the selected areas listed under the priority areas (Part II, C, 4.). The application should have the potential to encourage regional or national program delivery in one (1) of the selected priority areas. In Single Institution Proposals, grant funds are limited to the applicant institution (i.e., sub-award budgets are not allowable). A Project Director may receive only one (1) new award as the lead individual in a Need Area that focuses on a single subject or discipline. **Funds do not** have to be equally divided among project years.

2. Joint Project Applications (see Part VIII, E. - Definitions):

Teaching, Research and/or Extension applications that **support joint projects** (Part VIII, E. Definitions), including approaches to: scientific investigations (Research); curriculum

development, student training, or faculty preparation (Teaching); or program delivery (Extension) that are multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary and that address critical U.S. food, agricultural, natural resources and human science issues at the local, state, regional and national level(s). The applications should address food, agricultural, natural resources and human science priority areas identified in Part II, C, 4. In Joint Project Proposals, the applicant institution will transfer no more than one-half (1/2) of the awarded funds to the other institutions participating in the project.

3) Professional Development:

The purpose of the Professional Development program is to help faculty enhance their networking and competitive capacity by working collaboratively with colleagues from 1890 and 1862 land-grant universities, other public and private universities, federal agencies (e.g., the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service, USDA-Forest Service, National Institutes of Health, National Science Foundation, and Department of Energy), private and non-governmental institutions, foundations, and other domestic and international research entities.

Professional Development Grants are intended to provide an opportunity for individual faculty members (i.e., each award is to support one faculty member at the applicant university) to enhance the quality of their research, teaching, and/or extension work. Examples of projects addressing this area include, but are not limited to:

- Gaining experience with recent developments or innovative technology relevant to their professional responsibilities;
- Working under the guidance and direction of experts who have substantial expertise in an area related to project/career goals;
- Working with professionals or peers in government, industry, or colleges or universities to learn new applications and enhance network within a field; and/or
- Expanding competence with new methods of information delivery related to Teaching and Extension.

Professional Development applications that support Teaching, Research and/or Extension faculty, may include approaches such as:

- a) Sabbaticals;
- b) Mini-sabbaticals for short-term training;
- c) Faculty exchanges; or
- d) Taking courses.

The training must address critical U.S. food, agricultural, natural resources and human science issues at the local, state, regional and national level(s). The application should align with the university's strategic plan for food, agriculture and natural resources. Applications should also address food, agricultural, natural resources and human science priority areas identified in Part II, C, 4.

The maximum award for Professional Development grants is \$100,000. Awards are subject to the 30 percent (30%) indirect cost limit as described in Part IV.D. Funds may be used for salary and benefits (up to one year), travel, supplies and training/course fees. **Funds will not be awarded** to support activities in fulfillment of degree requirements or travel to make presentations at conferences or meetings.

A professional development project must **name one (1) of the project types (teaching, research or extension) as the Primary Project Type.** There is no program code for the Professional Development applications. Therefore, **it is imperative that the applicants clearly identify the primary area in their abstract/summary and select the appropriate program code for this area.**

Applicants may submit a Professional Development application as well as another grant type (i.e., Single or Joint), but can only receive one (1) award per or pursuant to this solicitation. Faculty will not receive more than one (1) Professional Development award within a five (5) year period.

Sub-awards

Joint Proposals (and Integrated Proposals as appropriate) should include a separate sub-award budget for each of the identified project partners. The award of grant funds through sub-awards is limited to the eligible applicant institutions and collaborating institutions who are participating in joint or integrated project proposals.

Partnering Entities

In addition to sub-awards, Single Institution, Joint and/or Integrated Project applications may have Partnering Entities (State government, federal agencies/offices, and private sector organizations). NIFA encourages collaborative efforts with Partnering Entities who will be involved in conducting the proposed work. However, the intent of the CBG is to enhance the research, teaching and extension capabilities of 1890 institutions as means for advancing student learning, scientific expertise development and community engagement. Consequently, Partnering Entities may only receive reimbursement for non-salary minor expenses such as materials and supplies.

E. Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research

The responsible and ethical conduct of research (RCR) is critical for excellence, as well as public trust, in science and engineering. Consequently, we consider education in RCR essential to the preparation of future scientists. In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 7 CFR Part 3022, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Per award terms and conditions, grant recipients shall, upon

request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training.

Note that the training referred to herein shall be either on-campus or off-campus training. The general content of the ethics training will, at a minimum, emphasize three key areas of research ethics: authorship and plagiarism, data and research integration, and reporting misconduct. Each institution will be responsible for developing its own training system, as schools will need flexibility to develop training tailored to their specific student needs. Grantees should consider the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program for RCR (<https://www.citiprogram.org/rcrpage.asp>). Typically this RCR education addresses the topics of: Data Acquisition and Management - collection, accuracy, security, access; Authorship and Publication; Peer Review; Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities; Collaboration; Conflict of Interest; Research Misconduct; Human Subject Research; and Use of Animals in Research.

PART III—ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Applications may only be submitted by 1890 Land-Grant Institutions, including Tuskegee University. Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project. Failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of application deadline may result in the application being excluded from consideration or, even though an application may be reviewed, will preclude NIFA from making an award. The eligible institutions are:

Alabama A&M University	Prairie View A&M University
Alcorn State University	South Carolina State University
Central State University	Southern University and A&M College
Delaware State University	Tennessee State University
Florida A&M University	Tuskegee University
Fort Valley State University	University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Kentucky State University	University of Maryland-Eastern Shore
Langston University	Virginia State University
Lincoln University (MO)	West Virginia State University
North Carolina A&T State University	

Faculty and students receiving support for **developmental activities or educational costs** must be a citizen or national of the United States, as defined in Part VIII, E. - Definitions. Students must be enrolled at institutions that are eligible to receive CBG awards (see above paragraphs). Where student or faculty eligibility is claimed under 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22), documentary evidence from the Immigration and Naturalization Service as to such eligibility must be made available to NIFA upon request.

Faculty must be a citizen, national or permanent resident of the United States to serve as a Project Director (PD) on a project. United States citizenship is not required to serve as a co-PD or key personnel on a project.

Faculty may not serve as PD on more than two (2) active 1890 CBG projects. If an applicant has two active projects, at least one project must be scheduled to expire by the end of the current fiscal year. Additionally, faculty may not submit more than one application as the lead PD to the 1890 CBG program in FY 2015. However, there is no limit on the number of applications for which faculty may be listed as co-PD or key personnel.

Joint and integrated project award recipients may subcontract, as deemed appropriate, to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary to conduct a successful project. The subcontract must advance capacity building at the 1890 institution in the area of the submitted application.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

NIFA does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

PART IV—APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Electronic Application Package

Only electronic applications may be submitted via Grants.gov to NIFA in response to this RFA. We urge you to submit early to the Grants.gov system. For an overview of the Grants.gov application process see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process.html>.

New Users of Grants.gov

Prior to preparing an application, we recommend that the Project Director/Principal Investigator (PD/PI) first contact an Authorized Representative (AR, also referred to as Authorized Organizational Representative or AOR) to determine if the organization is prepared to submit electronic applications through Grants.gov. If not (e.g., the institution/organization is new to the electronic grant application process through Grants.gov), then the one-time registration process must be completed PRIOR to submitting an application. It can take as long as 2 weeks to complete the registration process so it is critical to begin as soon as possible. In such situations, the AR should go to **“Register” in the top right corner of the Grants.gov web page (or go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>) for information on registering the institution/organization with Grants.gov.** Part II.1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide contains detailed information regarding the registration process. Refer item 2. below to locate the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide”.

Steps to Obtain Application Package Materials

To receive application materials:

1. You must download and install a version of Adobe Reader compatible with Grants.gov to access, complete, and submit applications. For basic system requirements and download instructions, see <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>. Grants.gov has a test package that will help you determine whether your current version of Adobe Reader is compatible.
2. To obtain the application package from Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>. Under Step 1 click on “Download a Grant Application Package,” and enter the funding opportunity number **USDA-NIFA-CBGP-004895** in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.” This guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If you require assistance to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating Adobe forms) or submitting the application, refer to resources available on

the Grants.gov website (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html>). Grants.gov assistance is also available at:

Grants.gov customer support

800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Closed on [federal holidays](#).

Email: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov iPortal (see <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>):

Top 10 requested help topics (FAQs), Searchable knowledge base, self-service ticketing and ticket status, and live web chat (available 7 a.m. - 9 p.m. ET). Get help now!

Have the following information available when contacting Grants.gov:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of agency you are applying to
- Specific area of concern

See <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/electronic.html> for additional resources for applying electronically.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

You should prepare electronic applications following Parts V and VI of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed to prepare an application in response to this RFA. **If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.**

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., PDF) in Part III section 3. of the guide. ANY PROPOSALS THAT ARE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE REQUIREMENTS (e.g., content format, PDF file format, file name restrictions, and no password protected files) WILL BE AT RISK OF BEING EXCLUDED FROM NIFA REVIEW. Grants.gov does not check for NIFA required attachments or that attachments are in PDF format; see Part III section 6.1 of the guide for how to check the manifest of submitted files. Partial applications will be excluded from NIFA review. We will accept subsequent submissions of an application until close of business on the closing date in the RFA (see Part V, 2.1 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further information).

Grants.gov provides online tools to assist if you do not own PDF-generating software. You will find PDF conversion software at <http://test.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/pdf-conversion-software.html>.

For any questions related to the preparation of an application, review the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide and the applicable RFA. If assistance is still needed for preparing application forms content, contact:

- Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov
- Phone: 202-401-5048
- Business hours: Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. ET, excluding federal holidays.

1. SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 2. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Note: Project titles should include no more than 140 characters.

2. SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 3. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

3. R&R Other Project Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 4. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 7. Project Summary/Abstract. Project Summary/Abstract is required in all applications and is **limited to one (1) page**. Applicants are encouraged to revisit the page numbers after converting the narrative to PDF format and make the necessary adjustments if the required page limit has been exceeded. **Project Summary/Abstract that exceeds this page limit requirement will not be accepted for review.** The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of CBG. Further, the Summary **must** include:

1. Relevant NIFA Challenge Area (see Part II, C, 6.);
2. Project Types (see Part II, C);
3. Total anticipated number of students to be served by the project (i.e., participating in a learning opportunity, using the developed curriculum or instrumentation, scholarship/fellowships);
4. Need Area addressed (see Part II, C, 2);
5. Discipline Code (see Part II, C, 5.);
6. Program Code (see Part II, C, 3);
7. For **Professional Development Applications** – Indicate overall project goals and supporting objectives; and
8. For all other applications -- Anticipated impact on building and strengthening capacity of the 1890s in food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences as related to research, teaching and extension.

The summary must succinctly describe the objectives to be achieved and the activities to be undertaken in the project. If the applicant incorrectly designates a project within a funding allocation category or no designation is made, NIFA reserves the right to assign a discipline and/or program code. See Part V. 4.7 of NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions.

To ensure uniformity of applications, all applicants must use the format of the Project Summary/Abstract Template posted at http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/1890_capacity/pdf/project_summary_1890s.pdf.

b. Field 8. Project Narrative.

NOTE: The Project Narrative shall not exceed **20** pages of written text and up to **five (5)** additional pages for figures and tables. We have established this maximum (**25** pages) to ensure fair and equitable competition. Applicants are encouraged to include a **table of contents** in the project narrative, which **will not count toward the narrative's page limitation**. Applicants should revisit the page numbers after converting the narrative to PDF format and make the necessary adjustments if the required page limit has been exceeded. **Project narratives that exceed this page limit requirement will not be accepted for review.**

Prepare the application using standard size (8 1/2" x 11") paper, one (1)-inch margins, no type smaller than 12 point font, and 1.5 line spacing. Use an easily readable font face (e.g., Arial, Times New Roman). Please keep in mind that following the formatting instruction and quality of the presentation of the whole application are a part of the evaluation criteria (see Part V, B). Information may not be appended to an application to circumvent page limitations prescribed for the Project Narrative. Extraneous materials will not be used during the peer review process.

For the integrated applications, the Project Narrative Section **must** include the elements of a logic model detailing the activities, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project. This information may be provided as a narrative or formatted into a logic model chart. The logic model planning process is a tool that should be used to develop your project **before** writing your proposal. Two (2) of the twenty five (25) pages are allowed to be used solely for logic model information. The PD should select the appropriate location within the narrative section of their logic model. More information and resources related to the logic model planning process are provided at http://www.NIFA.usda.gov/about/strat_plan_logic_models.html. **The logic model is also recommended for single and joint applications.**

❖ **For professional development applications**, the Project Narrative section **may not exceed seven (7) pages, including figures and tables**. Use page formatting requirements as described above.

It is recommended that applicants utilize tables and graphs as a means of summarizing essential information supporting the justification or need for the proposed project. Tables and graphs will help summarize information that may have an important bearing on the potential success of the proposed project. Tables should also be used to summarize the expected outcomes of each goal and the connection to NIFA goals/priorities and those of the PD(s) institution.

1. **For Teaching Applications**, examples of information sets that might be included in tables are as follows:
 - a) Focusing on student development, a table may depict essential information such as course names, learning objectives, learning environment enhancements (if applicable), and student characteristics. Such a table would help to summarize essential basic information leaving space in the narrative to describe and explain the teaching initiative;
 - b) Focusing on faculty development in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences, a table presenting descriptive information on current faculty abilities and capabilities, areas of limited or absent expertise, and low numbers of tenure track faculty;
 - c) Focusing on student recruitment, retention, and/or graduation a useful table could be one that depicts enrollment and graduation trends in the major(s), faculty to student ratio, number of available scholarships, internships, and job placement of majors/graduate; and/or
 - d) Focusing on student experiential learning, a table could demonstrate the alignment of project objectives with specific activities of the learning experience.
2. **For Research Applications**, examples of information sets that might be included in tables are as follows:
 - a) A table could be used to list the research question(s) and hypothesis (when it is relevant) and the expected contributions towards the goals and objectives of the proposal. The table may precede the objectives section and clearly support the project's justification and be consistent with the aim, objectives, methodology, and analysis; and/or
 - b) A case may be clearly made for the scientific merit of the proposed project. This might include clear justification of the scientific approach, support for the research question/hypotheses based on previously reported work by the PD(s) and others in the field, and a connection of the objectives to the overall aim or goal of the study and to the production of outcomes that connect with the NIFA goals and priorities.

3. **For Extension applications**

A case could be made for what is lacking or undeveloped in terms of extension program support systems, needed technology upgrades, or need improvements or applications for the development of information processing and delivery, program development, and how the project plans to address one or all of these.

4. For Integrated Applications

Applicants could provide a sufficient description for why an integrated approach should be pursued in addressing the issue for which the project is targeted.

These examples could be used as guidance when the Project Narrative section is prepared.

Note: Applicants should address all components of the Evaluation Criteria in their Project Narrative (see Part V, B).

To facilitate application review and evaluation, the applicant must include the following underlined wording as headings in the Project Narrative, followed by the applicant's response for each item.

A. Potential for Building and Strengthening Capacity and Advancing the Quality of Teaching, Research or Extension

- 1. Significance of the Problem and Opportunity:** Clearly state the specific instructional, research or extension problem or opportunity to be addressed and the connection(s) with the institutional goals or strategic plan or Plan of Work. Describe how and by whom the focus and scope of the project were determined.
- 2. Project Justification:** Summarize the body of knowledge justifying the need for the proposed project using graphical and tabulated format when possible. Discuss how the project will be of value at the state, regional, national, or international level(s). Describe any ongoing or recently completed significant activities related to the proposed project for which previous funding was received under this program or other funding programs (including projects supported under the NIFA 1890 Facilities Grants Program and 1890 Formula Programs).

The ability of a project to build capacity is an integral part of the application. Description of capacity building is different among institutions as well as between different projects within the individual institution. The section below is a description of what should be considered by applicants when writing the justification as well as the proposal as a whole.

a. Teaching

Baseline information: What is lacking or in need of development - to be built, built up, or built upon? Applicants should establish that the proposed teaching/educational enhancement activity is limited or not developed at the institution or how it will contribute to human capacity development at the institution, or agriculture workforce.

Building Process: How will the proposed project build capacity? Applicants should clearly demonstrate how the proposed project will develop

teaching/educational capabilities that result in the institution's ability to improve instructional resources, enhance teaching skill sets, improve learning environments, and/or recruit, retain, or graduate students beyond the funding of the grant.

Instructional Reach: What will be new or different in terms of teaching, student learning, or student educational engagement as a result of the proposed project initiatives? Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed project's activities will transform the institution's ability to affect instruction and/or teaching in food, agricultural, natural resources and human science disciplines.

Impact Potential: What is the change in capacity that will enable the institution to build or strengthening food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences educational programs? Applicants should show how the expected changes represent increased ability or capacity to provide better instruction in food, agricultural, natural resources and human science disciplines.

b. Research

Baseline information: What is lacking or in need of development - to be built, built up, or built upon? Applicants should establish that the proposed research initiatives or research capability is limited or not developed at the institution.

Building Process: How will the proposed project build capacity? Applicants should clearly demonstrate how the proposed project will develop the proposed research initiatives or capacity so that it may result in the institution's improved ability to conduct similar or new research activities beyond the funding of the grant.

Research Potential: What would be a new or different in terms of anticipated research capacity as a result of successful completion of proposed project? Applicants should demonstrate how the proposed project activities or capability will transform the institution's ability to contribute to food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences.

Impact Potential: What are the expected changes in capacity which will enable the institution to enhance or add new research capacity? Applicants should show how those anticipated changes represent increased ability or capacity to conduct the food, agricultural, natural resources and human science related research.

c. Extension

Baseline information: Applicants should establish that the proposed extension activity or capability is limited or does not exist at the institution. What capacity is lacking in a particular area or need to be enhanced or significantly improved?

Building Process: Applicants should clearly demonstrate how the proposed Extension initiative will change the institutional capacity to more effectively respond to current and/or emerging issues as well as the capacity to be more responsive to clients' needs, coordinate with appropriate academic units, and improve learning environments for training food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences majors.

Impact Potential: Applicants should show how the proposed initiative or activity will change the institution's capacity to plan, implement, evaluate and/or report the impact of Extension programs. Address what the change in capacity will enable the institution to do.

3. Innovation:

- a. ***Teaching applications*** should clearly identify the discipline to be addressed, the core competencies that students will attain through new knowledge gained, the project's creative approach to improving the quality of food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences education, solving an education problem, or advancing educational equity.
- b. ***Research applications*** should describe the creative approach to improving the quality of food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences research, solving a scientific problem, or advancing a field of science, that address objective(s) that are of high importance at the 1890 institution, and identify potential results in institutional capacity building.
- c. ***Extension applications*** should describe the creative approach to improving the communication with clientele, education programs as related to health, energy, environmental issues, youth, communities and small farm management and identify potential results in institutional capacity building.
- d. ***Multidisciplinary and/or Problem-based Focus:*** Indicate how the teaching project is relevant to multiple disciplines in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences, or with other academic curricula. Indicate how the research or extension project is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary, and/or involves integrated (teaching, research and extension) activities. Identify the field of science and the objective(s) that are of high importance at the 1890 institutions to be addressed. Where partners are included in the proposal, provide a concise plan on how they will be managed and coordinated. Clearly identify potential results in 1890 institutional capacity building. Also, discuss whether the project may be adapted by, or serve as a model for other institutions.

B. Proposed Approach and Cooperative Linkages:

1. **Objectives:** Cite and discuss the specific project objectives to be accomplished and, for joint and integrated project proposals, identify the individual(s) responsible to accomplish each objective.
2. **Plan of Operation and Methodology:** Describe procedures for accomplishing the objectives of the project. Describe plans for management of the project to ensure its proper and efficient administration. Clearly identify and describe the metrics for evaluating successful project management. Describe the way in which resources and personnel will be used to conduct the project. Discuss extent to which students from the 1890 institutions will be involved in the teaching, research or extension project. Identify roles and responsibilities for key project personnel.
3. **Timetable:** Provide a timetable for conducting the project. Identify all important project milestones and dates as they relate to project start-up, execution, evaluation, dissemination, and closeout. Identify limitations that may impact the timetable and provide strategies to avoid or compensate for the limitations. For joint or integrated project proposals, include the responsibilities of all partners in the project timetable.
4. **Products, Results and Measurable Outcomes:** Explain, including metrics, the expected products and results, outcome, and their potential impact on strengthening food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences education, research and extension in the United States. Metrics to assess products, outputs and outcomes are to be clearly delineated in the proposal. If the application has USDA cooperator(s), include clear identification of the role of the federal cooperator(s), as well as the other partners and the expected outcome(s) for the 1890 institution. ~~(Part IV, B.)~~ See Part IV, B. c. – Field 11 – Other Attachments.)

Describe the economic, environmental or social gains resulting from the project. Describe the significant benefits gained. (See Definitions, ‘Outcomes’ Part VIII, E).

5. **Evaluation Plans:** Program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer basic questions about proposed initiatives to build or strengthening capacity of the institution in a particular area in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences. Provide a methodology and implementation plan for evaluating the accomplishment of stated objectives, results and measurable outcomes during the project. Clearly identify the performance measure(s) by which the project’s success will be assessed. In the evaluation plan, indicate the criteria and corresponding weight of each to be used in the evaluation process. Describe any data to be collected and analyzed, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine the extent to which the needs underlying the project are met. Indicate how the evaluation will determine whether and to what degree the project had an impact on teaching, research, and extension capacity. Identify those personnel who will be responsible for assessing project results and administering the project evaluation and reporting process and include a description of their expertise or

credentials. The evaluation plan is a crucial component of the application because of the increase emphasis on accountability mandated by Congress.

The outline sections of the evaluation plan may be used as a guide when developing an evaluation plan to monitor building and strengthening the capacity of the institutions:

- **Section I:** A description of the evaluation framework which specifies what you want to evaluate, what questions are to be addressed in the evaluation, and the timeframe for conducting the evaluation.
 - **Section II:** A description of the program implementation objectives.
 - **Section III:** A description of the program outcome objectives, performance measures and impact.
 - **Section IV:** Procedures for managing and monitoring the evaluation and reporting.
6. ***Dissemination Plans:*** The application must document how project accomplishments (products, results and impacts, etc.) will be disseminated to the broadest extent throughout the academic or scientific community and to policy makers and the public. Discuss the institution's commitment to disseminate project results and products. Identify target audiences and explain methods of communication.
7. ***Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts:*** Explain how the project will maximize partnership and collaborative efforts to strengthen food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences education, research and extension (e.g., involvement of faculty in related disciplines at the same institution, joint projects with other educational institutions, or expand cooperative activities with business or industry) at the 1890 institution. As appropriate, clearly describe the collaborative management plan to assure successful outcomes towards project goals. (See Part IV, B. c. – Field 11 – Other Attachments.)

Provide evidence, via **letters from the parties involved in the partnership** or collaborative arrangement indicating the roles, responsibilities and anticipated outcomes from each member of the partnership. NOTE: Partnership and Collaborative Letters must be signed by the Authorized Representatives (ARs).

C. **Institutional Capability:**

1. ***Institutional Resources:*** Document that necessary institutional resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials), and other appropriate resources, will be made available to the project. Demonstrate how the institutional resources to be made available will be adequate to carry out the activities of the project when combined with any support requested from USDA.

2. ***Continuation Plans:*** Describe the likelihood of, or specific plans for, continuation or expansion of the project beyond the period of USDA support. You must indicate if eventual self-support is built into the project and if plans are being made to institutionalize the program if it meets with success.

D. Roles and Project Responsibility of Key personnel:

Clearly identify the roles and project responsibilities of each key person and outcomes for each member and describe the management plan to assure successful project outcomes associated with the project.

- ❖ ***For Professional Development Applications*** – The Project Narrative for these applications also should include:
 - A general description of the research, teaching, and/or extension interests and goals of the applicant in order to provide perspective for the application;
 - A description of the training program, course or project to be pursued while on the sabbatical leave;
 - A statement of how the professional development project will enhance the capabilities of the applicant; and
 - A statement of future research, teaching and/or extension goals and objectives once the professional development project is complete and how the experience will enable the applicant to pursue these goals.

c. Field 11. Other Attachments (PDF Attachment)

1. Response to Previous Review. This requirement only applies to "Resubmitted Applications" (Part II, B.2.). Applicants must respond to the previous review panel summary (one page only) titled "RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS REVIEW." If desired, additional comments may be included in the text of the Project Narrative, subject to the page limitations of that section.
2. Accomplishment report of previously funded projects. Only applicants (Project Directors) with an active or previously received 1890 capacity building grant award must submit no more than a one (1) page accomplishment report. The report should include impacts and outcomes of the funded project and briefly describe how the new proposal is related to the outcomes from previous award. A copy of the REEport report should be included in the Appendix. See field 11 – Other Attachments.
3. Cooperative Arrangement Letter(s). Applicants are not required, but are encouraged to have collaboration with USDA. If the application has a USDA collaborator(s), documentation of USDA - 1890 Institution collaboration must be provided in the application; Partnership and Collaborative Efforts (Part IV, B.). The collaboration should advance capacity building at the 1890 institution in the area of the submitted

application. Provide a letter (PDF format) from the USDA cooperating office and **signed by the USDA Unit Director (supervisor of the USDA collaborating staff person) and the USDA collaborator (i.e., staff person who will work on the project)** that clearly identifies the role and expected outcomes of their participation. Identify the person(s) at each agency or office who will serve as liaison or technical (scientists, educator, etc.) contact for the project and provide their phone number and email address.

NOTES:

- **Because of potential conflicts of interest, no NIFA cooperators are permitted.**
 - **The collaborative efforts with USDA will not be considered in the review process of the application.**
4. Institution/School/Department Goals and Objectives. Include an institutional letter indicating that the application is within the strategic plan of the institution in food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences, school or the department and that funding will potentially build or strengthening the capacity of your institution, school or department. The letter must be signed by the Dean, Agricultural Research Director, or Extension Administrator (limit to one page, PDF format).
5. Collaborative Arrangements. If it is necessary to enter into formal consulting or collaborative arrangements with others, such arrangements should be fully explained and justified. If the consultant(s) or collaborator(s) are known at the time of the application, a vitae or resume should be provided. In addition, letters of support should be provided that describe the services that will be provided. The applicant is required to provide additional information on consultants and collaborators in the budget portion of the application, including the rate of pay, letters of commitment, and curriculum vitae. (PDF Attachment. No Page Limit.)
- ❖ ***For relevant Professional Development Applications*** (e.g., sabbaticals and faculty exchanges) – Provide documentation that arrangements have been made with a relevant expert(s) to serve as host, including:
- A letter from the home institution detailing the particular arrangements at the home institution with respect to salary, date, and duration of the professional development experience;
 - A letter from the host or training institution indicating willingness to serve in this capacity and a description of the host's contribution to the proposed activities, both scientifically and with regard to use of facilities and equipment; and
 - A statement signed by the Department Head or equivalent official at the host institution indicating a commitment to provide research, teaching and/or extension related space and facilities for the period of the applicant's presence.

NOTE: Letters from consultant(s) and/or collaborator(s) must be signed by the Authorized Representatives (ARs).

6. Expected Outcomes. Title the PDF attachment “Expected Outcomes” in the document header and save file as “ExpectedOutcomes”. Please use a format, similar to what is provided below, to submit expected impacts.

Recommended Format for Submitting Expected Impacts

Primary Project Function: (Choose one)		
TEACHING: <input type="checkbox"/>	EXTENSION : <input type="checkbox"/>	RESEARCH: <input type="checkbox"/>
Total expected impact during entire grant period		Expected Number
Number of farmers to be served		
Number of products to be developed for students through grant funds (i.e., curricula, academic programs, recruitment/retention programs, materials, experiential learning opportunities)		
Number of collaborations to be developed between institutions		
Number of faculty attending professional development: sabbaticals, workshops, conferences, etc.		
Number of individuals who indirectly will benefit from the projects (i.e., using the curriculum/instrumentation, enrolled in the program, recruited or retained)		
Total number of students to be directly supported by grant (i.e., scholarships, fellowships, assistantships, internships)		
Number of underrepresented students to be supported during the grant period		
Number of women students to be supported during the grant period		
Number of students who will graduate as a result of the grant during grant period		
Number of students who will complete advanced or additional degree programs as a result of the grant (graduate, professional)		
Number of students who will complete internships and other experiential learning during the grant-period		
Number of students who will complete post-doctoral experiences as a result of this grant		
Number of students who will complete international experiences during the grant-period		

4. R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 5. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide. This section of the Guide includes information about the people who require a Senior/Key Person Profile, and details about the Biographical Sketch and the Current and Pending Support, including a link to a suggested template for the Current and Pending Support.

The biographical sketch for Key Personnel must be submitted as an attached PDF file. **Each vita may not exceed two (2) pages (excluding publications listing)**. Applicants must attach biographical sketches as PDF files **for each of the Key Personnel**.

Also, **you must attach** “Current and Pending Support” information for each senior/key person identified above.

Note: Even if no other funding is currently reported under the ‘Active’ section of this attachment, you must still list information for this grant application under the ‘Pending’ section of this attachment for each senior/key person identified above. Total time commitment (Current and Pending) cannot exceed 100% at any given time. The time

commitment for this project should not be less than the time for which salary compensation is requested. Further, all projects must include time commitments.

- a. ***Project Role Field*** – Complete appropriately.
 - ❖ ***For Professional Development Applications*** – Select “PD/PI” for the Professional Development applicant. Select “Other” for the corresponding host expert(s)/mentor(s) (if applicable), and any other personnel whose qualification merit consideration in the evaluation of the application.
- b. ***Attach Biographical Sketch Field*** – Title the attachment as ‘Biographical Sketch’ in the document header and save file as ‘Biographical Sketch’.
 - ❖ ***For Professional Development Applications*** – A biographical sketch must be submitted for the Professional Development applicant, the host expert(s)/mentor(s) (if applicable), and any other personnel whose qualifications merit consideration in the evaluation of the application.
- c. ***Attach Current and Pending Support Field*** – Title the attachment as ‘Current and Pending Support’ in the document header and save file as ‘CurrentPendingSupport’.
 - ❖ ***For Professional Development Applications*** – Include Current and Pending Support forms for the Professional Development applicant and the host expert(s)/mentor(s) (if applicable).

5. R&R Personal Data – As noted in Part V, 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide, the submission of this information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.

6. R&R Budget (for Prime Award)

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part V, 7. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

NIFA does not require matching support for this program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process as evaluation criteria.

Budget Narrative: This section is not a part of the Project Narrative Section (Part IV, B.E.b. Field 8).

The Budget Narrative should be no more than five (5) pages and must be attached as PDF file to the R&R Budget Form-Section F-K.

The Budget Narrative must contain two (2) parts and **must be labeled as subheadings:**

- **Budget Justification, (including cost details)** of budget line-items, and
- **Cost-effectiveness** of overall budget

Budget Narrative: Application will not be accepted for review if this document is not included or not in PDF format (no exceptions). Applicants must include a budget request that is appropriate for this solicitation. All USDA CBG project grants have a cap of \$600,000.

Professional Development grants have a cap of \$100,000. Applications with a budget request that exceeds these caps will be excluded from review.

Discuss how the budget specifically supports the proposed project activities. Explain how budget line-items, such as professional or technical staff time, salary, travel, equipment, etc., are necessary and reasonable to achieve project objectives. All expenditures for the applicant and each collaborator must be itemized and justified to indicate relevant capacity building at the 1890 institution(s). If the proposal addresses more than one (1) Need Area (see Part I, E.), applicants should include estimates of the proportion of the funds requested from USDA that will support each area. A justification is required for all travel related to the proposed project. **All costs must be fully explained and justified.**

Reasonable travel expenses to attend the Project Director's Conference and/or other relevant meetings may be included in the application's budget under travel expenses.

Cost-effectiveness: Discuss the project's cost-effectiveness. Show how the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, or leverages additional funds. For example, discuss how the acquisition of diagnostic equipment will be cheaper in the long run than paying a company to run the samples or how an initiative has the potential to generate a critical mass of expertise and activity focused on a Need Area, or to promote coalition building that could lead to future ventures.

7. SF 424 (R&R) Sub-award Budget Attachment (Only required if submitting a Joint or Integrated Project Proposal, as deemed appropriate)

Joint and Integrated Project Proposals, as deemed appropriate, must include separate subcontract budgets (R&R Sub-award Budget Attachment Form), budget narratives, and letters of support for each of the identified project partners which are **signed by the Authorized Representatives (ARs) of the subcontracting organizations.**

8. Supplemental Information Form

Information related to the questions on this form is dealt with in detail in Part VI, 1. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

a. Field 2. Program to which you are applying. Enter the program name (i.e., enter “**1890 CBG Program**”) and the program code as follows:

Research Program Code = “**EQ**”; or

Teaching Program Code = “**EP**”; or

Extension Program Code = “**EWE**”

(NOTE: Program Codes must be ALL UPPER CASE)

In order to provide proper and timely processing of an application, it is imperative that the program code be accurate.

b. Field 7. Key Words. Applicants should enter the most relevant words to describe the proposed project. In addition, applicants should include keywords that clearly designate

which of the Challenge areas; Program Priority Areas, Need Areas, and Discipline(s) are addressed in the application.

- c. **Field 8. Conflict of Interest List.** See Part VI, 1.8 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide for further instructions and a link to a suggested template.

C. Submission Dates and Times

Prior to electronic submission of the application via Grants.gov, it is strongly recommended that an administrative review be conducted to ensure that an application complies with all application preparation instructions. An application checklist is included in Part VII of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide to assist with this review.

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by Grants.gov by **5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 26, 2015**. Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted for review.

If you have trouble submitting an application to Grants.gov, you should FIRST contact the Grants.gov Help Desk to resolve any problems. Keep a record of any such correspondence. See Part IV. A. for Grants.gov contact information.

We send email correspondence to the AR regarding the status of submitted applications. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received correspondence **from NIFA** regarding a submitted application within 30 days of the established deadline, contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application. **Failure to do so may result in the application not being considered for funding by the peer review panel. Once the application has been assigned a proposal number, this number should be cited on all future correspondence.**

D. Funding Restrictions

With prior approval, in accordance with the terms & conditions of the award, some grant funds may be used for minor alterations or repairs deemed necessary to retrofit existing teaching, research or extension spaces in order to carry out a funded project. However, requests to use grant funds for such purposes must demonstrate that the alterations or repairs are incidental to the major purpose for which a grant is issued.

Section 716 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (H.R. 3547) limits indirect costs to 30 percent (30%) of the total Federal funds provided under each award. Similar language may be included in the FY 2015 appropriation, therefore, when preparing budgets, you should limit your

request for the recovery of indirect costs to the lesser of your institution's official negotiated indirect cost rate or the equivalent of 30 percent (30%) of total Federal funds awarded.

If your institution does not have, or cannot obtain, a negotiated rate you must calculate an indirect cost rate in order to request indirect costs. You should calculate an indirect cost rate based on actual costs for the entire organization from the most recently completed accounting year. If no prior cost history exists, you should use budgeted costs for the entire organization.

You should follow the example(s) found at:

http://nifa.usda.gov/business/indirect_cost_process.html for information regarding this process.

You may elect not to charge indirect costs and, instead, use all grant funds for direct costs. If indirect costs are not charged, the phrase "None requested" should be written in this space."

E. Other Submission Requirements

You should follow the submission requirements noted in Part IV, section 1.9 in the document entitled "NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide."

For information about the **status of a submitted application**, see Part III., section 6. of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide.

PART V—APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

We evaluate each application in a 2-part process. First, we screen each application to ensure that it meets the administrative requirements as set forth in this RFA. Second, a technical review panel will evaluate applications that meet the administrative requirements.

We select reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields, taking into account the following factors: (a) The level of relevant formal scientific, technical education, or extension experience of the individual, as well as the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, teaching, or extension activities; (b) the need to include as reviewers experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, teaching, or extension fields; (c) the need to include as reviewers other experts (e.g., producers, range or forest managers/operators, and consumers) who can assess relevance of the applications to targeted audiences and to program needs; (d) the need to include as reviewers experts from a variety of organizational types (e.g., colleges, universities, industry, state and federal agencies, and private profit and non-profit organizations) and geographic locations; (e) the need to maintain a balanced composition of reviewers with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution; and (f) the need to include reviewers who can judge the effective usefulness of each application to producers and the general public.

When each peer review panel has completed its deliberations, the responsible program staff of CBG will recommend that the project: (a) be approved for support from currently available funds or (b) be declined due to insufficient funds or unfavorable review.

CBG reserves the right to negotiate with the PD/PI and/or with the submitting organization or institution regarding project revisions (e.g., reductions in the scope of work, funding level, period, or method of support) prior to recommending any project for funding.

B. Evaluation Criteria

We will use the evaluation criteria below to review applications submitted in response to this RFA:

The maximum score a proposal can receive is 100 points. The scores are distributed between 5 categories identified below. Please keep these evaluation criteria in mind while completing your application.

1. Potential for Building and Strengthening Capacity and Advancing the Quality of Teaching, Research or Extension (50 points).

- *Impact on building and strengthening capacity (25 points);*
- *Continuation plans (5 points);*
- *Innovation (10 points);*
- *Products and results (5 points); and*

- *Institutional commitment (5 points).*

This criterion is used to assess the likelihood that the project will have an impact on and advance the quality of food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences by strengthening institutional capacities to meet clearly delineated needs in the 1890 institutional objectives of high importance, or the strategic goals or the Plan of Work. Elements considered include institutional goals in food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences, NIFA/USDA's Strategic Goals and/or Objectives, identification of a problem or opportunity to be addressed as one (1) of the Program Priority Areas, justification for the project, innovation, advancing educational equity, multidisciplinary and/or problem-based focus, and potential for adoption by other institutions, the institution's capability to perform the project and the degree to which the project will strengthen its teaching, research or extension capacity. Elements include the institution's commitment to the project, the adequacy of institutional resources (administrative, facilities, equipment, and/or materials) available to carry out the project, potential for academic, research or extension enhancement, and plans for project continuation or expansion beyond the period of USDA support.

2. Overall Approach, Cooperative Linkages and Quality of the Proposal (30 points).

- *Proposed approach (10 points);*
- *Evaluation (5 points);*
- *Dissemination (5 points);*
- *Partnership and collaborative efforts (5 points); and*
- *Overall quality (5 points).*

This criterion relates to the soundness of the proposed approach including: objectives that show a clear connection to the institutional goals or strategic plan or Plan of Work; methodology, plan of operation, timetable that describe limitations and strategies to avoid or compensate for identified limitations; for joint project proposals a timetable that includes the responsibilities of all partners in the project timetable; expected products and results; an evaluation plan that includes performance measures to assess project success; and dissemination plans.

For Teaching, Research and Extension proposals, emphasis is placed on the identified core competencies that students and/or clients will attain through new knowledge, the quality of educational or research support provided to the applicant institution through its partnerships and collaborative initiatives, and on the potential cooperative linkages likely to evolve as a result of this project clearly identifying the key personnel responsibilities for products, outputs, outcomes and potential impacts. Metrics to assess products, outputs and outcomes are to be clearly delineated in the proposal include clear identification of the role of the partners and the outcomes for the 1890 institution. Participation of USDA agency cooperator is optional; however, if the application included USDA cooperator(s), his/her role must be clearly identified.

Overall quality of the proposal relates to the degree to which the proposal complies with the application guidelines. The proposal is enhanced by its adherence to instructions (table of contents, organization, pagination, margin and font size, the specified page limitation, appendices, etc.); accuracy of forms; clarity of budget narrative; well prepared vitae for all key

personnel associated with the project; and presentation. Also assessed is how effectively ideas are presented, clearly articulated, and thoroughly explained, as well as the presence of all required forms.

3. Personnel Resources (10 points).

This criterion relates to the adequacy of the number and qualifications of key persons who will develop and carry out the project, and the qualifications of project personnel who will manage the successful attainment of the proposed outcomes, provide for the assessment of project results and impacts and dissemination of these findings. Proposals should clearly identify the role of all key personnel, responsibilities and outcomes for each member, and describe the management plan to assure successful project outcomes. Qualified and sufficient personnel are critical for meeting the capacity building objective of a project.

4. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness (10 points).

- *Budget, including justification (5 points); and*
- *Cost effectiveness (5 points).*

This criterion relates to the extent to which the total budget adequately supports the project and is cost effective. Elements considered include the necessity and reasonableness of costs to carry out project activities and achieve project objectives; the appropriateness of budget allocations between the applicant and any collaborating institution(s); the adequacy of time committed to the project by key project personnel; and the degree to which the project maximizes the use of limited resources, optimizes educational value for the dollar, achieves economies of scale, leverages additional funds, and focuses expertise and activity on high-priority Teaching, Extension or Research Need Areas based on the 1890 institutional objectives or strategic plan or Plan of Work. The points will be distributed as indicated above.

❖ Professional Development Applications

These evaluation criteria will be used for the review of **Professional Development** applications.

- 1.** The merit of the proposed activities as a means of enhancing the capabilities and competitiveness of the applicant (i.e., relevant methods, appropriate collaborators, clear objectives and targeted outcomes, and realistic timetable for completion) (50 points);
- 2.** The applicant's previous experience and background along with the appropriateness of the proposed activities/training for the goals proposed (20 points);
- 3.** Relevance of the project/training to long-range improvements in the sustainability of U.S. agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and rural communities (20 points); and
- 4.** Appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of the proposed budget (10 points).

C. Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality

During the peer evaluation process, we take extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may impact review or evaluation. For the purpose of determining conflicts of interest, we determine the academic and administrative autonomy of an institution by reference to the current Higher Education Directory, published by Higher Education Publications, Inc., 1801 Robert Fulton Drive, Suite 555, Reston, VA, 20191. Phone: (888) 349-7715. Web site: <http://www.hepinc.com>.

Names of submitting institutions and individuals, as well as application content and peer evaluations, are kept confidential, except to those involved in the review process, to the extent permitted by law. In addition, the identities of peer reviewers will remain confidential throughout the entire review process, to the extent permitted by law; therefore, the names of the reviewers will not be released to applicants.

D. Organizational Management Information

Specific management information relating to an applicant shall be submitted on a one time basis, with updates on an as needed basis. This requirement is part of the responsibility determination prior to the award of a grant identified under this RFA, if such information has not been provided previously under this or another NIFA program. We will provide you copies of forms recommended for use in fulfilling these requirements as part of the preaward process. Although an applicant may be eligible based on its status as one of these entities, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual involved or a determination that an applicant is not responsible based on submitted organizational management information).

E. Application Disposition

An application may be withdrawn at any time before a final funding decision is made regarding the application; however, withdrawn applications normally will not be returned. An electronic copy of each application that is not selected for funding, including those that are withdrawn, will be retained by CBG for a period of three (3) years.

PART VI—AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds available for such purpose, the NIFA awarding official shall make grants to those responsible, eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the grant shall be no later than September 30 of the federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. The project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations, and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions at 7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

B. Award Notice

The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information including, at a minimum:

- (1) Legal name and address of performing organization or institution to which the director has issued an award under the terms of this request for applications;
- (2) Title of project;
- (3) Name(s) and institution(s) of PDs chosen to direct and control approved activities;
- (4) Identifying award number and the Federal Agency Identification Number assigned by NIFA;
- (5) Project period, specifying the amount of time NIFA intends to support the project without requiring recompetition for funds;
- (6) Total amount of financial assistance approved for the award;
- (7) Legal authority(ies) under which the award is issued;
- (8) Appropriate Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number;
- (9) Applicable award terms and conditions (see <http://www.nifa.usda.gov/business/awards/awardterms.html> to view NIFA award terms and conditions);
- (10) Approved budget plan for categorizing allocable project funds to accomplish the stated purpose of the award; and

(11) Other information or provisions deemed necessary by NIFA to carry out its respective awarding activities or to accomplish the purpose of a particular award.

C. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications considered for review and to project grants awarded under this program. These include, but are not limited to the ones listed below.

2 CFR Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

2 CFR Part 400 —USDA implementation of 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

2 CFR Part 415 – USDA General Program Administrative Regulations.

7 CFR Part 1, subpart A—USDA implementation of the Freedom of Information Act.

7 CFR Part 3—USDA implementation of OMB Circular No. A-129 regarding debt collection.

7 CFR Part 15, subpart A—USDA implementation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

2 CFR Part 180 and Part 417--OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) and USDA Nonprocurement Debarment and Suspension.

7 CFR Part 331 and 9 CFR Part 121—USDA implementation of the Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002.

2 CFR Part 416—USDA General Program Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments.

2 CFR Part 418—USDA implementation of Restrictions on Lobbying. Imposes prohibitions and requirements for disclosure and certification related to lobbying on recipients of federal contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

2 CFR Part 421—USDA Implementation of Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants).

2 CFR Part 422—Research Institutions Conducting USDA-Funded Extramural Research; Research Misconduct.

7 CFR Part 3407—USDA procedures to implement the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

7 CFR 3430—Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs-- General Award Administrative Provisions.

29 U.S.C. 794 (section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973) and 7 CFR Part 15b (USDA implementation of statute) —prohibiting discrimination based upon physical or mental handicap in federally-assisted programs.

35 U.S.C. 200 et seq. —Bayh Dole Act, controlling allocation of rights to inventions made by employees of small business firms and domestic nonprofit organizations, including universities, in federally-assisted programs (implementing regulations are contained in 37 CFR Part 401).

44 U.S.C. 3541 et seq. (Pub. L. 107-347) - Federal Information System Security Management Act of 2002 (FISMA), to improve computer and network security within the Federal Government. Applies to awardees if it will collect, store, process, transmit, or use information on behalf of NIFA.

D. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are to use REEport, NIFA's electronic, web-based inventory system to submit an initial project initiation which documents expected products and outcomes of the project. Additionally, annual progress report documenting realized project outcomes must be submitted to the electronic system. The web-based system facilitates an electronic workflow between grantees and NIFA for project accomplishments to be easily searchable and allows for public access to information on Federally-funded projects. The details of these reporting requirements, including those specific to the annual and final technical reports, are included in the award terms and conditions.

1. Project Directors' Meeting

During the tenure of a grant, Project Directors (excluding Professional Development grants) must attend at least one (1) National Project Directors' meeting, if offered or indicated by NIFA. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss project and grant management, opportunities for collaborative efforts, future directions for research and education reform, and opportunities to enhance dissemination of exemplary end products/results.

2. Annual Performance Report

An Annual Performance Report must be submitted to the USDA program contact person within 90 days after the completion of the first year of the project, and annually thereafter during the life of the grant. **Annual performance reports must contain data to document the outputs and outcomes and will need to be collected by the grantee.** Please see the “Expected Outcomes” table in Part IV, B for suggested metrics that may be relevant to your project. Annual Performance Reports are to be submitted through the NIFA electronic, Web-based inventory

system that facilitates both grantee submissions of project outcomes and public access to information on Federally-funded projects.

3. Final Performance Report

A Final Performance Report must be submitted to the USDA program contact person within 90 days of the expiration date of the project. The expiration date is specified in the award documents and modifications thereto, if any. Generally, the Final Performance Report should clearly document the overall outcomes and outputs of the project. Please see the “Expected Outcomes” table in Part IV, B for suggested metrics that may be relevant to your project. **Products such as CDs, publication reprints, pamphlet, books or book chapters, should be mailed directly to the Agency Contact in Part VII of this RFA.**

4. Other Reports

Grantees should be aware that NIFA may, as a part of its own program evaluation activities, carry out in-depth evaluations of assisted activities. Thus, grantees should be prepared to cooperate with NIFA personnel, or persons retained by NIFA, in evaluating the institutional context and the impact of any supported project. Grantees may be asked to provide general information on any students and faculty supported, in whole or in part, by a grant awarded under this program; information that may be requested includes, but is not limited to, standardized academic achievement test scores, grade point average, academic standing, career patterns, age, race/ethnicity, gender, citizenship, and disability.

PART VII—AGENCY CONTACTS

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact:

Programmatic Contact:

Edwin Lewis, Ph.D.

National Program Leader

Division of Community and Education, Institute of Youth, Family, and Community

Location: 4341 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

Phone: (202) 690 - 4565

Fax: (202) 720 - 2030

Email: elewis@nifa.usda.gov

Administrative/Business Contacts:

Duane Alphs

Team Leader, Branch II

Location: 2152 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

Phone: (202) 401 - 4326

Fax: (202) 401 - 6271

Email: dalphs@nifa.usda.gov

Rochelle McCrea

Team Leader, Team I, Branch II

Location: 2160 Waterfront Centre

[Full Address and Directions](#)

Phone: (202) 401 - 2880

Fax: (202) 401 - 6271

Email: rmccrea@nifa.usda.gov

PART VIII—OTHER INFORMATION

A. Access to Review Information

We will send copies of reviews, not including the identity of reviewers, and a summary of the panel comments to the applicant PD after the review process has been completed.

B. Use of Funds; Changes

1. Delegation of Fiscal Responsibility

Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, awardees may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

2. Changes in Project Plans

a. The permissible changes by the awardee, PD(s), or other key project personnel in the approved project shall be limited to changes in methodology, techniques, or other similar aspects of the project to expedite achievement of the project's approved goals. If the awardee or the PD(s) is uncertain as to whether a change complies with this provision, the question must be referred to the Authorized Departmental Officer (ADO) for a final determination. The ADO is the signatory of the award document, not the program contact.

b. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved goals or objectives prior to effecting such changes. In no event shall requests be approved for changes that are outside the scope of the original approved project.

c. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all changes in approved project leadership or the replacement or reassignment of other key project personnel, prior to effecting such changes.

d. The awardee must request, and the ADO must approve in writing, all transfers of actual performance of the substantive programmatic work in whole or in part and provisions for payment of funds, whether or not federal funds are involved, prior to instituting such transfers, unless prescribed otherwise in the terms and conditions of the award.

e. The project period may be extended without additional financial support, for such additional period(s) necessary to complete or fulfill the purposes of an approved project, but in no case shall the total project period exceed any applicable statutory limit or expiring appropriation limitation. The terms and conditions of award include information about no-cost extensions of the award and when ADO's prior approval is necessary.

f. Changes in Approved Budget: Unless stated otherwise in the terms and conditions of award, changes in an approved budget must be requested by the awardee and approved in writing by the

ADO prior to instituting such changes, if the revision will involve transfers or expenditures of amounts requiring prior approval as set forth in the applicable Federal cost principles, Departmental regulations, or award.

C. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of the record of NIFA transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the Secretary determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application. The original copy of an application that does not result in an award will be retained by the Agency for a period of three years. Other copies will be destroyed. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An application may be withdrawn at any time prior to the final action thereon.

D. Regulatory Information

For the reasons set forth in the final Rule related Notice to 7 CFR part 3015, subpart V (48 FR 29114, June 24, 1983), this program is excluded from the scope of the Executive Order 12372 which requires intergovernmental consultation with State and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this Notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

E. Definitions

Please refer to [7 CFR 3430, Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Financial Assistance Programs--General Award Administrative Provisions](#), for applicable definitions for this NIFA grant program.

In addition, the following definitions apply specifically to this RFA:

Capacity Building means enhancing and strengthening the quality and depth of an institution's research, academic and/or extension programs as evidenced by its: faculty expertise, scientific and technical resources, research environment, curriculum, student experiential learning opportunities, scientific instrumentation, library resources, academic standing and racial, ethnic, or gender diversity of its faculty and student body, faculty and student recruitment and retention programs, extension delivery systems, organizational structures and reward systems for attracting and retaining first-rate research faculty or students at the graduate and post-doctorate levels.

Eligible participant means, for purposes of the Program Need Areas "Faculty Preparation and Enhancement for Teaching" and "Student Recruitment and Retention", an individual who is a citizen or national of the United States as defined in this section.

Extension application means an application that addresses one (1) or more of the Extension Need Areas or specific subject matter/emphasis areas identified in the annual Request for Applications related to strengthening Extension programs including, but not limited to, such initiatives as: Extension program development support systems, technology upgrades, Extension delivery/methodology, and other creative projects designed to provide needed enhancement of the Institutions Extension Capacity.

Extension capacity means the quality and depth of an institution's Extension infrastructure as evidenced by its: curriculum, instructional delivery systems, Extension faculty, volunteer and other program support systems, use of technology in program delivery, library resources and service to underserved populations.

Food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences means basic, applied, and developmental research, extension, and teaching activities in the food and fiber, agricultural, renewable natural resources, forestry, and physical and social sciences, in the broadest sense of these terms, including but not limited to, activities relating to the production, processing, marketing, distribution, conservation, utilization, consumption, research, and development of food and agriculturally related products and services, and inclusive of programs in agriculture, natural resources, aquaculture, forestry, veterinary medicine, family and consumer sciences (previously known as home economics), rural human ecology, rural economic, community, or business development, and closely allied disciplines.

Joint project application means a proposal for a project, which will involve the applicant 1890 Institution and one (1) or more other colleges, universities, community colleges, junior colleges, or other institutions, each of which will assume a major role in the conduct of the proposed project, and for which the applicant institution will transfer no more than one-half (1/2) of the awarded funds to the other institutions participating in the project. Only the applicant institution must meet the definition of “1890 Institution” as specified in this section; the other institutions participating in a joint project proposal are not required to meet the definition of “1890 Institution” as specified in this section, nor required to meet the definition of “college” or “university” as specified in this section. (See Part II, C.2.)

Outcomes means specific, measurable project results and benefits that, when assessed and reported; indicate the project’s plan of operation has been achieved. Measurable outcomes include:

- a) Results are intended or unintended consequences of the project, e.g., “...additional course materials now available online to reinforce student learning during non-classroom hours”;
- b) Products may be actual items or services acquired with funds, e.g., “...mechanisms and content to transition existing course(s) or elements of course(s) for Web-based access” or “created new and innovative prevention and intervention initiatives”; and
- c) Impacts are a measure of the results by comparing what might have happened in the absence of the funded project.

Partnering Entity means a unit of State government, federal agency/office, or private sector organization that will only receive reimbursement for non-salary minor expenses such as

materials and supplies but is nevertheless partnered with, and committed to, assisting an eligible institution in building capacity in teaching or research at the applicant 1890 institution.

Plan of Operation means a detailed, step-by-step description of how the applicant intends to accomplish the project's outcomes. At a minimum, the plan should include a timetable indicating how outcomes are achieved, a description of resources to be used or acquired, and the responsibilities expected of all project personnel.

Research application means an application that addresses one (1) or more of the Research Need Areas or specific subject matter/emphasis areas identified in the annual Request for Applications related to strengthening research programs including, but not limited to, such initiatives as: studies and experimentation in food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences , centralized research support systems, technology delivery systems, and other creative projects designed to provide needed enhancement of the Nation's food, agricultural, natural resources and human science research system.

Research capacity means the quality and depth of an institution's research infrastructure as evidenced by its: faculty expertise in the natural or social sciences, scientific and technical resources, research environment, library resources, and organizational structures and reward systems for attracting and retaining first-rate research faculty or students at the graduate and post-doctorate levels.

Single Institution any application with a single budget with no sub-award budget attachment.

Teaching means formal classroom instruction, laboratory instruction, and practicum experience in the food, agricultural, natural resources and human sciences and matters related thereto (such as faculty development, student recruitment and services, curriculum development, instructional materials and equipment, and innovative teaching methodologies) conducted by colleges and universities offering baccalaureate or higher degrees.

Teaching application (also see Teaching Need Area) means an application that addresses one (1) or more of the Teaching Need Areas or specific subject matter/emphasis areas identified in the annual Request for Applications and addressed by the applicant's proposal. The areas are derived from statutory language authorizing the grants program related to strengthening teaching programs including, but not limited to, such initiatives as: curricula design and materials development, faculty preparation and enhancement for teaching, instruction delivery systems, scientific instrumentation for teaching, student experiential learning, and student recruitment and retention.

Teaching capacity means the quality and depth of an institution's academic programs infrastructure as evidenced by its: curriculum, teaching faculty, instructional delivery systems, student experiential learning opportunities, scientific instrumentation for teaching, library resources, academic standing and racial, ethnic, or gender diversity of its faculty and student body as well as faculty and student recruitment and retention programs provided by a college or university in order to achieve maximum results in the development of scientific and professional expertise for the Nation's food, agricultural, natural resources and human science system.

Teaching Need Area (also see Teaching project grant) means the specific area(s) of educational focus identified in the annual Request for Applications and addressed by the applicant's proposal. This is a grant in support of a project that addresses one (1) or more of the identified educational need areas or specific subject matter/emphasis areas derived from statutory language authorizing the grants program related to strengthening teaching programs including, but not limited to, such initiatives as: curricula design and materials development, faculty preparation and enhancement for teaching, instruction delivery systems, scientific instrumentation for teaching, student experiential learning, and student recruitment and retention.

USDA agency cooperator means any agency or office of the Department which has reviewed and endorsed an applicant's request for support, and indicates a willingness to make available non-monetary resources or technical assistance throughout the life of a project to ensure the accomplishment of the objectives of a grant awarded under this program.

NOTE: Because of potential conflicts of interest, no NIFA cooperators are permitted.

F. Materials Available on the Internet

USDA and NIFA Strategic Plans:

Visit http://www.csrees.usda.gov/about/strat_plan_2014_2018.html to view the NIFA Strategic Plan. Visit <http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/usdasp.htm> to view the USDA Strategic Plan.

CBG program information will be made available on the NIFA web site at http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/education/in_focus/1890_if_1890.html. The following are among the materials available on the web page:

1. More information about upcoming CBG 2015
2. Stakeholder Input
3. Requests for Applications
4. Other application and program resources